cultivation as well as increasing the productivity of the existing land under agriculture, Government of India is implementing various schemes/programmes namely, National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), Soil Conservation for Enhancing the Productivity of Degraded Lands in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP and FPR), Reclamation and Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS), Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) etc. in the country. Three major initiatives namely, National Food Security Mission (NFSM), National Horticulture Mission (NHM) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) have been launched to enhance productivity of agricultural land and sustaining food security across the country.

Panel for revamping school education

*235. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has set up a panel for revamping school education in the country;

(b) if so, whether the standard of school education throughout the country is not up to the mark;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) to what extent the panel set up by Government for revamping school education throughout the country is going to improve the standards?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (d) A Round Table comprising educationists, academicians and representatives of civil society has been constituted on 23.9.2009 to advise the Department of School Education and Literacy on macro and micro issues pertaining to school education. The Round Table is one of the several forums in the Department for consultation and interaction on the various aspects of school education. Discussions in the Round Table are an ongoing process, and todate three meetings have been held, covering *inter alia* issues relating to universalisation of elementary education, teacher education, and public-private partnership in education. School education is largely in the domain of the State Governments, and standards across the country are uneven. Improving quality, content and process to reinforce the national and integrative character of education is a continuing endeavour of the Department of School Education and Literacy.

Abolition of insurance amount given to victims of train accidents

†*236. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is going to do away with the amount of insurance given to passengers or to their families affected by unprecedented accidents during rail travel;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the provisions for the amount given to rail passengers or to their family members affected by unprecedented accidents during rail travel; and

(d) the amount given during the last three years on this account?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) and (b) Safety of passengers is the topmost priority of Railways. Despite all precautions and best efforts, whenever accidents take place causing injury/death of passengers, it is the responsibility of the Indian Railways under the Railways Act, 1989 to pay the compensation as decreed by the Railway Claims Tribunal.

(c) An amount of Rs.40.82 crore has been provided under the head 'Accident Compensation' in Budget Estimates 2009-10.

(d) An amount of Rs.8.41 crore has been paid as compensation for victims of train accidents during the last three years.

Railway projects in Gujarat

*237. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has submitted a proposal in February, 2008 regarding providing facility of double stack container for Kandla-Bhiladi-Samdari-Jodhpur-Bhatinda railway line;

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal;

(c) whether her Ministry is considering to convert the route from Kandla to Palampur as part of Dedicated Freight Corridor between Delhi and Mumbai as proposed by Government;

(d) whether in view of development of ports in Gujarat, Government is planning to run special container train connections to its ports; and

(e) if so, by when Government proposes to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) and (b) No such proposal has been received from Government of Gujarat.

(c) Kandla - Palanpur section is not a part of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor. However, this section is one of the identified feeder routes to Western Dedicated Freight Corridor.

(d) and (e) It is the stated policy of Railways to provide rail connectivity to ports. Many such projects are under implementation through Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. Depending upon the traffic, container train operators are running regular container train services to major ports, such as Pipavav, Mundra and Kandla ports in Gujarat.